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273 - 138 A

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GB 2106293  
APR 1983

# (12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 106 293 A

(21) Application No 8127843  
(22) Date of filing 15 Sep 1981  
(43) Application published

7 Apr 1983

(51) INT CL<sup>3</sup>  
G07F 17/34  
(52) Domestic classification  
G4V 118 AA  
U1S 1174 G4V

(56) Documents cited  
GB A 2065948

(58) Field of search  
G4V

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## (54) Coin-free gaming machine

(57) In a "fruit machine" which displays the rotating reels 13a, 13b, 13c on a television screen 12, a player with a losing combination may be

granted a random chance to move a control symbol step-by-step along the screen to pick up a symbol and replace one symbol of a losing combination. If successful at this, he can then either collect his winning or gamble upon increasing it.

View of game machine

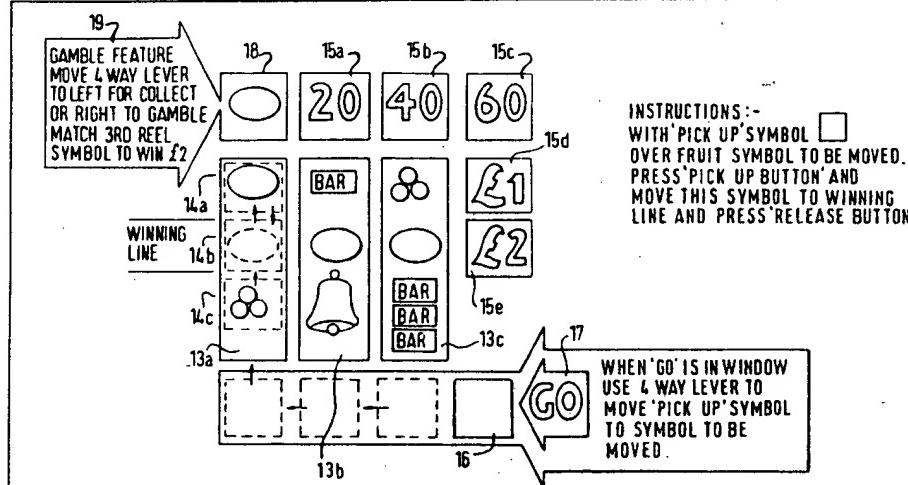


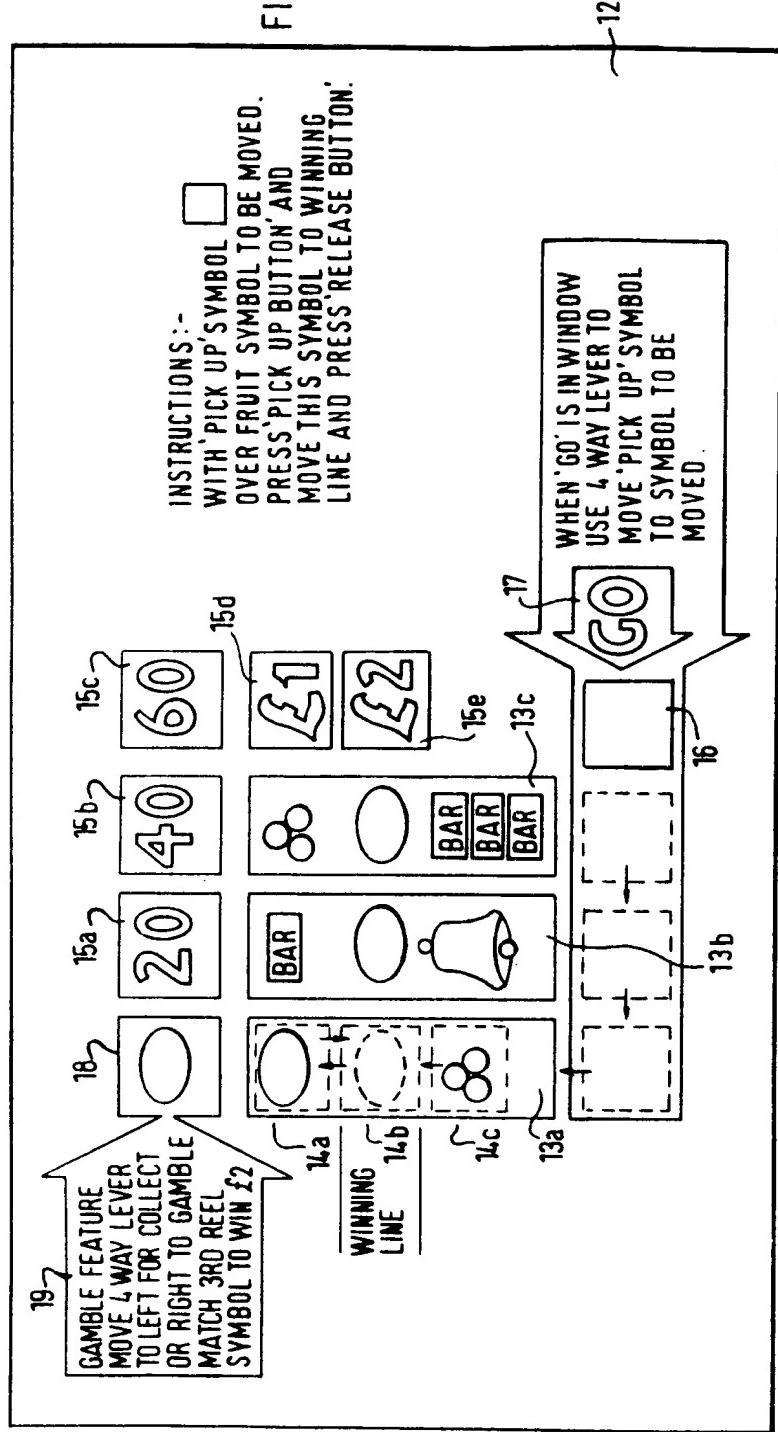
FIG.1.

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FIG. 1.



DOWN FIG. 3.



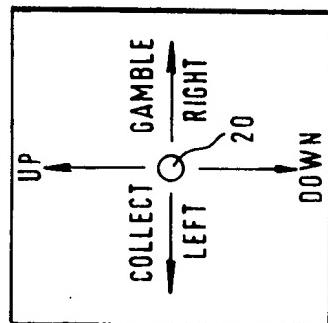
FIG. 2B.



FIG. 2A.



FIG. 2C.



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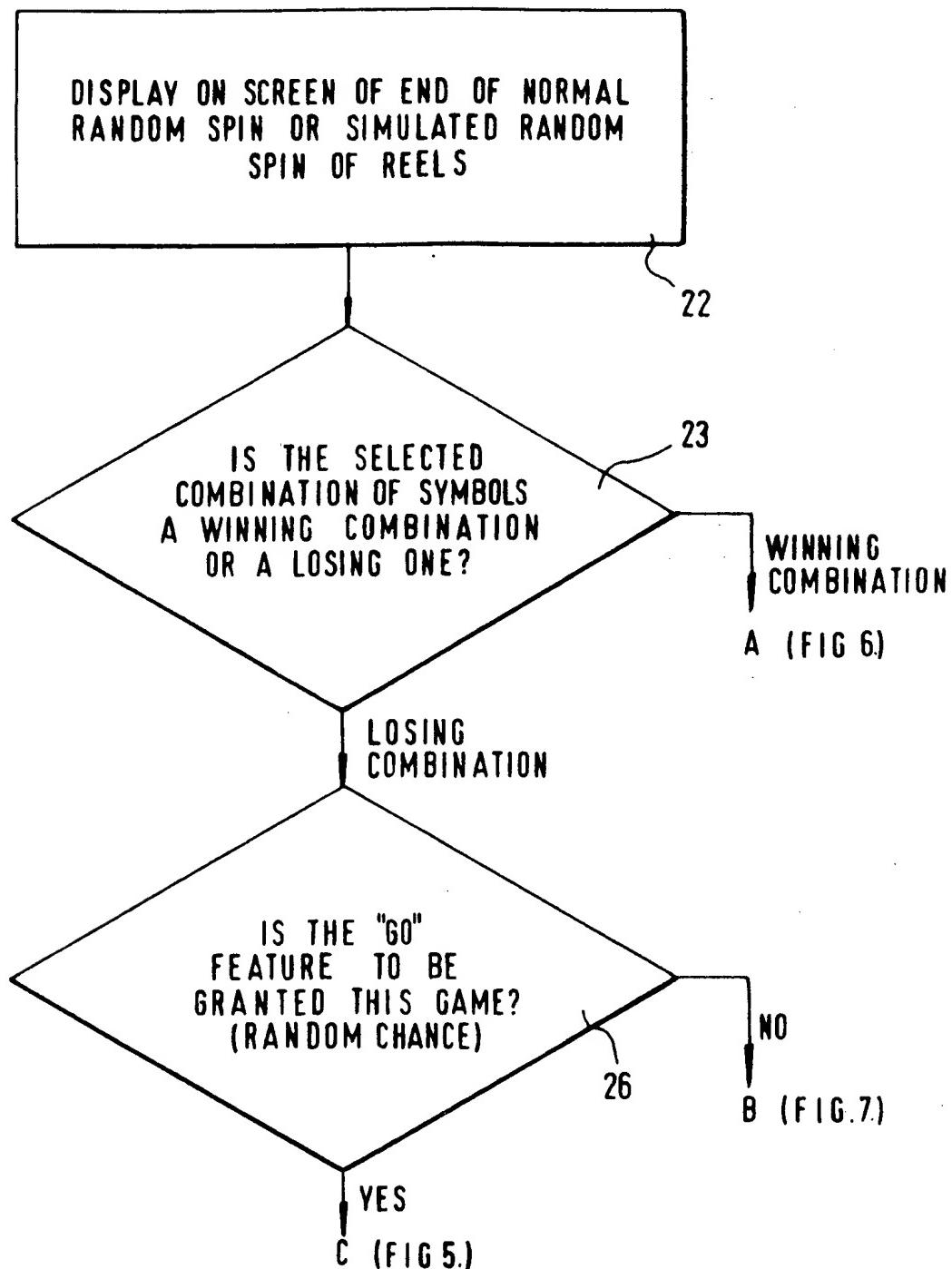
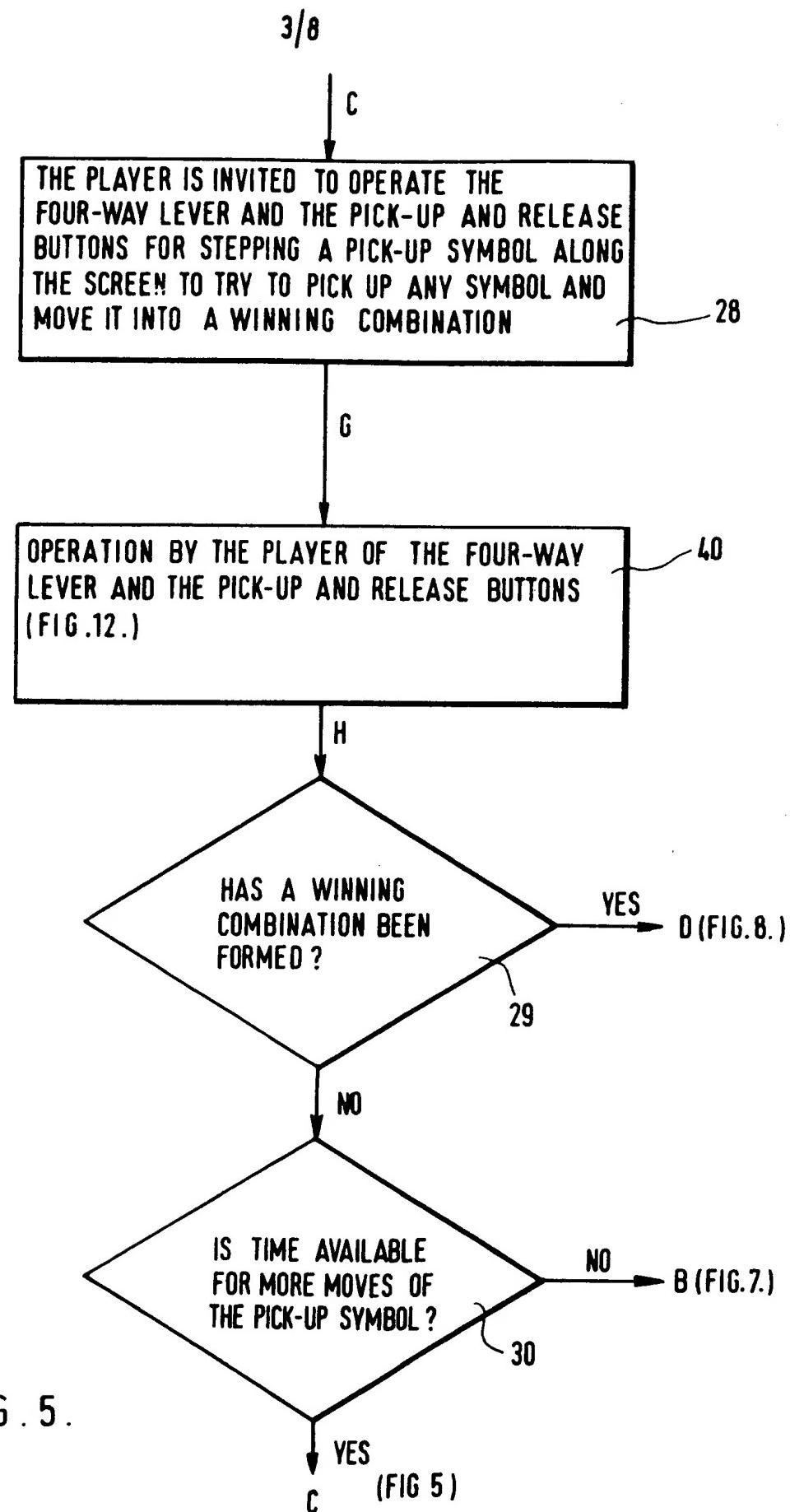


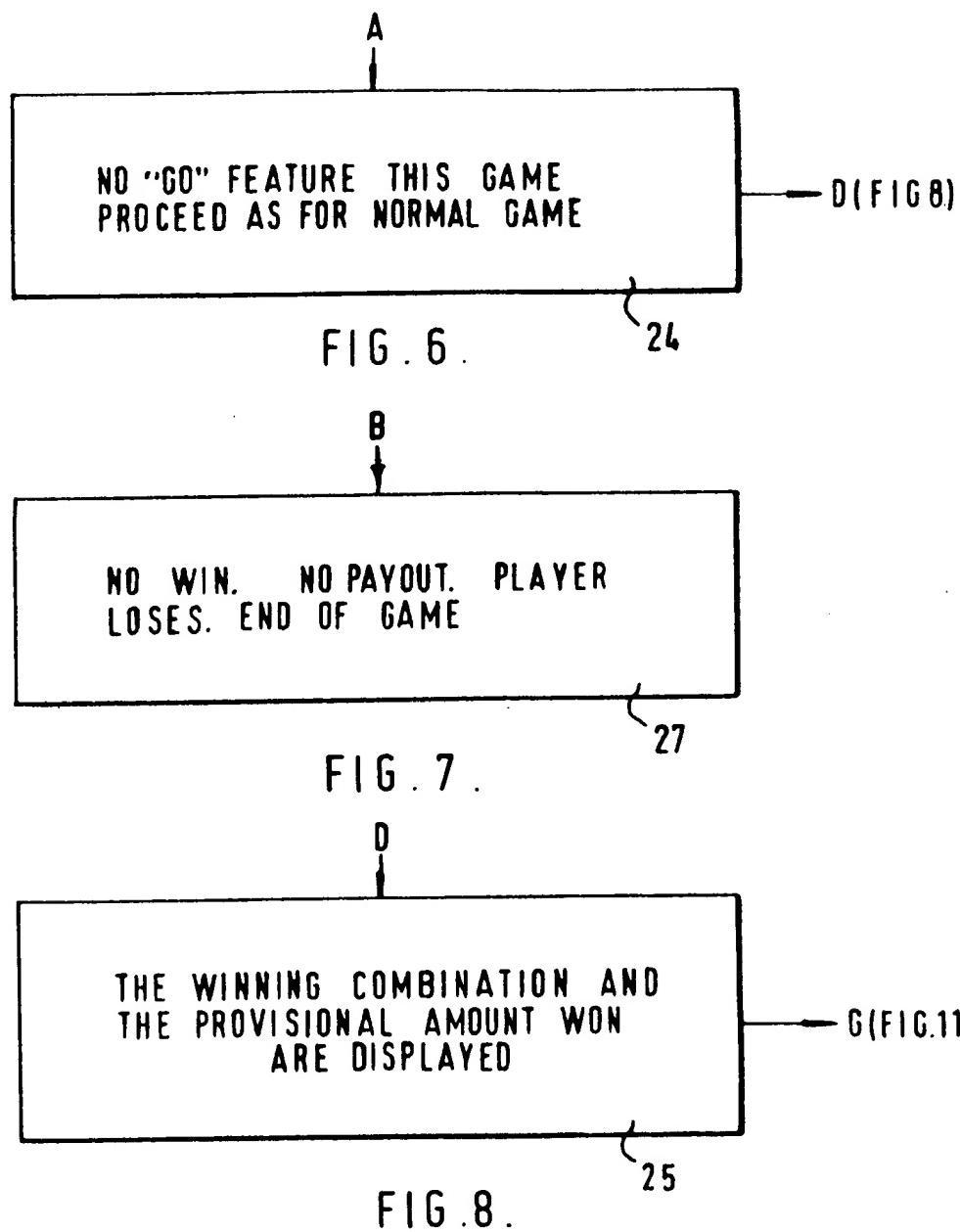
FIG.4.

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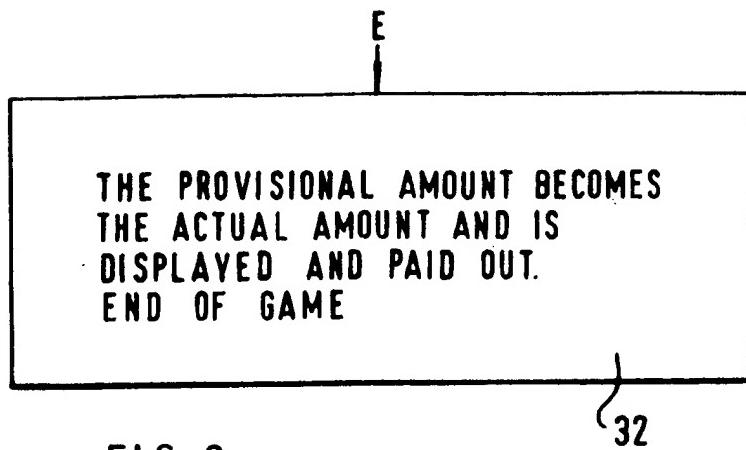


FIG. 9.

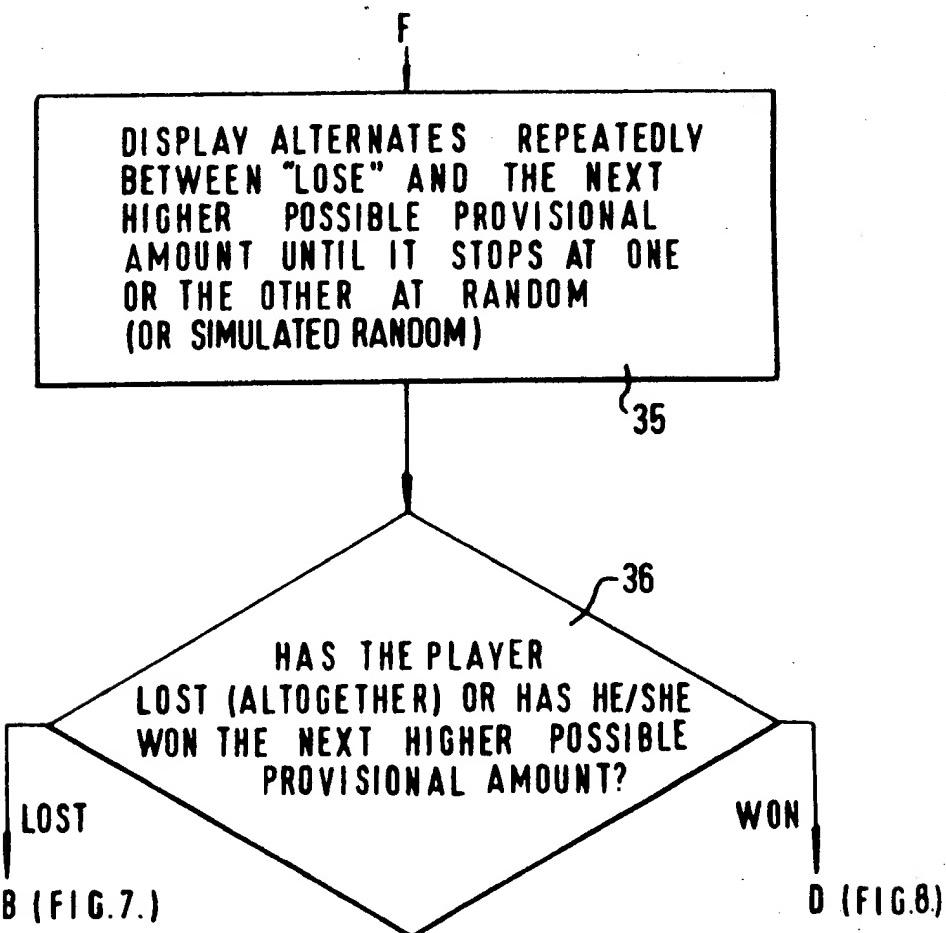


FIG. 10.

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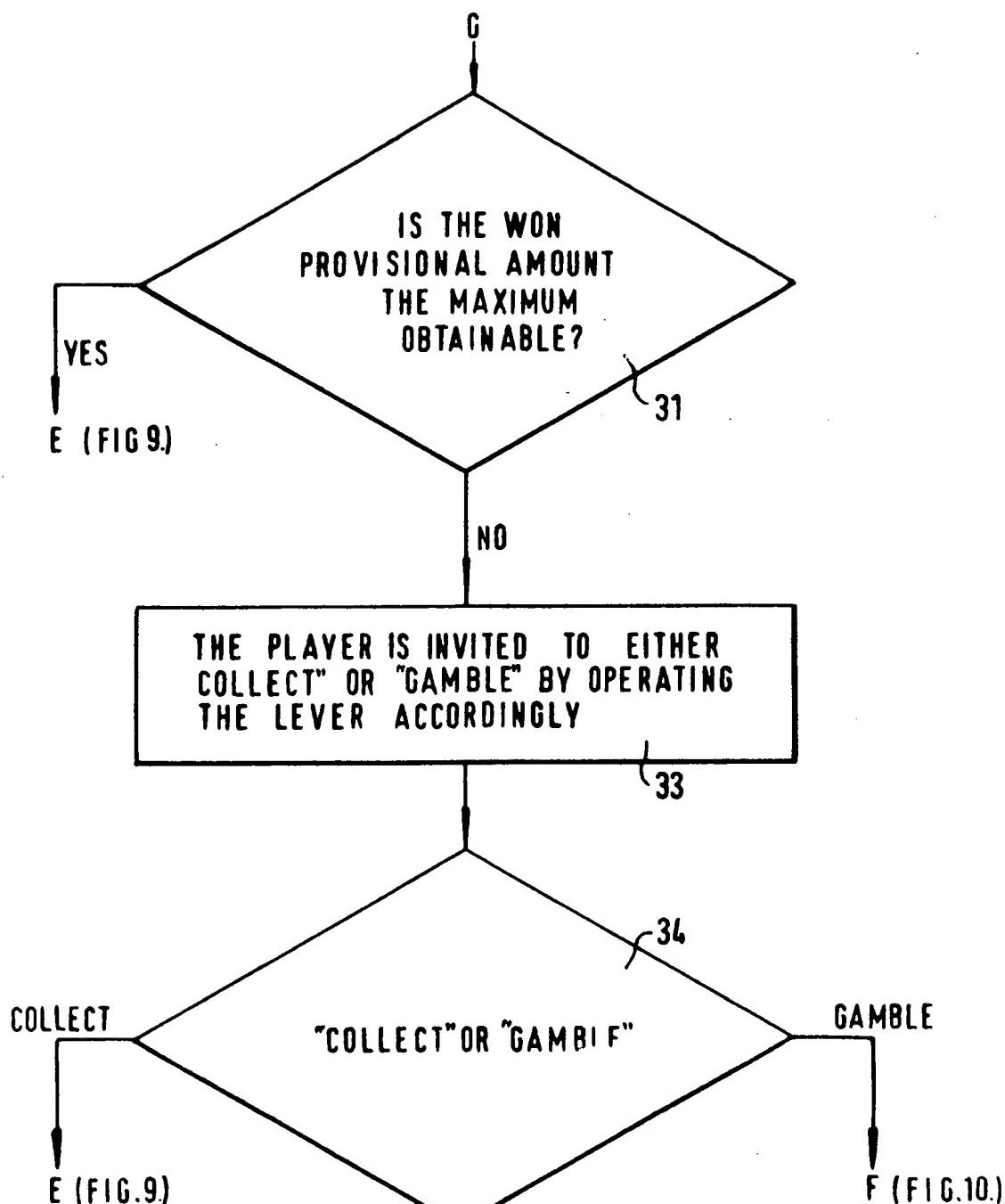


FIG.11.

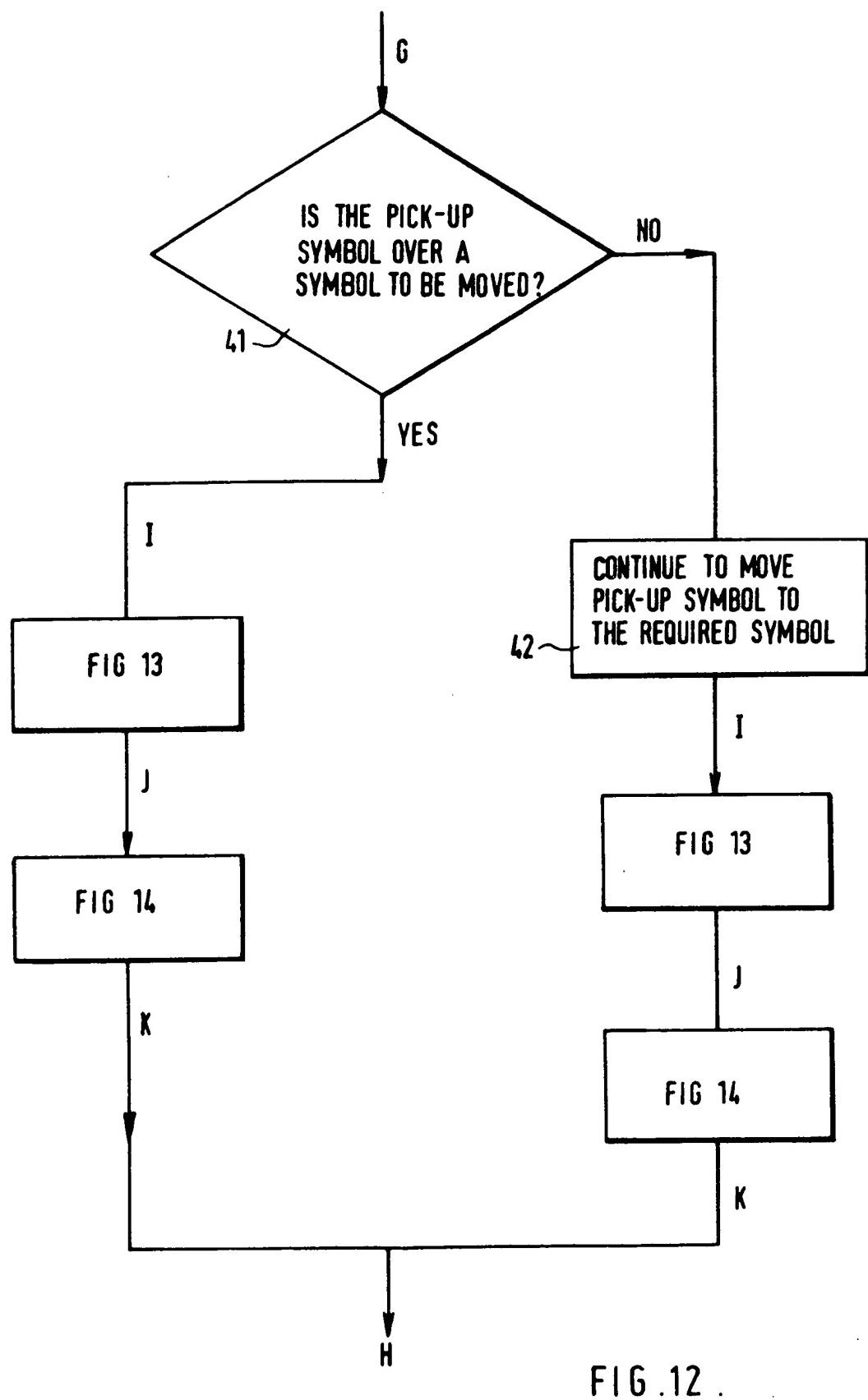


FIG.12.

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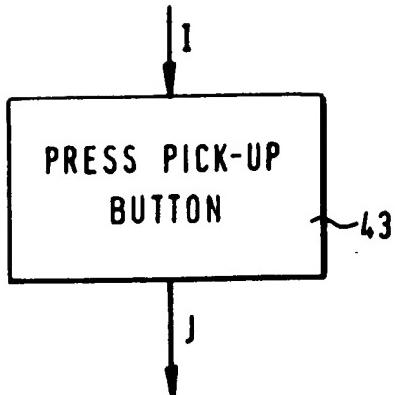


FIG. 13.

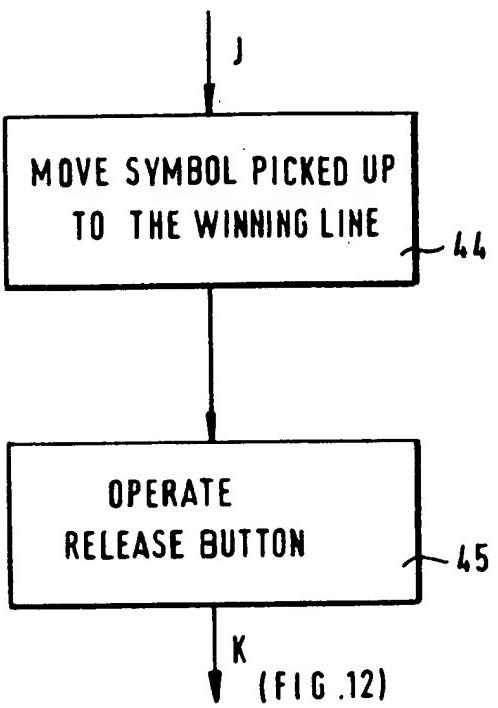


FIG. 14.

**SPECIFICATION**  
**Coin-free gaming machine**

This invention relates to a coin-free gaming machine of the type comprising first means defining a plurality of separate series of symbols and second means operative to select any symbol from each series and to display the combination of selected symbols from said plurality of series.

In a known and widely used exemplary 5 machine of this type said first means takes the form of a plurality of rotatable reels or drums, said second means operates by rotating the reels or drums to positions in which the selected symbols are visible through a window, and many (if not all) 10 of the symbols are pictures of various fruits, as a result of which the exemplary machine has become known colloquially as a "fruit machine".

An object of the invention is to enable a 15 machine of such a type to present a player with a chance of improving the result of a game.

According to the invention there is provided a 20 coin-free gaming machine comprising first means defining a plurality of separate series of symbols, second means operative to select a symbol from each series in a random or simulated 25 random manner and to provide a selected combination of symbols and to select other symbols of the series and to display the selected combination and the other selected symbols on a screen, third means predefining some 30 predetermined combinations of symbols as winning combinations and other combinations as losing combinations, fourth means operative to determine whether a selected combination is a 35 winning combination or a losing combination, and fifth means operative on some but not all of the occasions that a losing combination is selected to enable the losing combination to be changed to a winning combination, the operative occasions 40 being determined in a random or simulated random manner, said fifth means comprising sixth means operative to display on the screen, initially 45 in a position spaced apart from the selected symbols, a control symbol, seventh means operable by the player for moving the control 50 symbol on the screen in directions selected by the player, eighth means which, if operated when the control symbol is over out of the symbols displayed by the second means, to cause that 55 symbol to move thereafter with the control symbol, and eighth means which, when operated, causes the seventh means to cease to have effect until the seventh means is again operated, whereby if the sixth, seventh and eighth means 60 are operated correctly by the player one of the said other symbols selected by the second means can be moved into a desired position in which it becomes substituted for one of said selected combination of symbols to change a losing combination into a winning combination symbol such that, if substituted for one of the selected symbols, the losing combination would be 65 changed to a winning combination, and seventh means operable by the player for moving the

position of said other symbol on the screen in directions selected by the player such that, if some seventh means is operated correctly by the player, said other symbol can be moved to a desired position in which it becomes substituted for said one of the selected symbols so as to change the losing combinations to a winning combination.

Preferably the screen is a cathode ray tube screen.

Preferably said desired position is the actual position of said one of the selected combination of symbols.

Preferably said fifth means comprises ninth means operative, in the event of a winning 80 combination being obtained, to provide the player with a choice between either collecting a reward of a certain value or gambling upon increasing the value of the reward with the chance of decreasing the value of the reward.

Preferably said ninth means is operative in the event of the value of the reward being increased to provide the player with a further choice between either collecting the reward of the increased value or gambling upon still further 90 increasing the value of the reward with the chance of decreasing the value of the reward.

Preferably the decrease in the value of the reward is to zero.

Preferably said sixth means is operative to 95 sometimes display the control signal and sometimes display a signal indicating the seventh and eighth means are inoperative in a random or simulated random manner.

Preferably some losing combinations are such 100 that said fifth means is incapable of changing any of them to a winning combination.

Preferably said first and second means are operative to display or to simulate rotating reels or drums which stop at random or simulated 105 random on the screen.

The invention will be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 illustrates the screen of a machine embodying the invention;

Figs. 2A, 2B and 2C illustrate a four-way lever of the machine, a pick-up button and a release button respectively;

Fig. 3 illustrates an array of four buttons as an alternative to the lever of Fig. 2; and

Figs. 4 to 14 in combination form a "truth diagram" of the machine illustrating the logical sequence of events in operating the machine.

Referring to Fig. 1 of the drawings, the 120 machine is equipped with a television screen, shown schematically in Fig. 1, on which images are produced electronically by means within the machine in a manner analogous to the way in which images are produced on the television screens of well-known "space-invader" gaming machines.

Shown on the television screen 12 are (images of) three rotating "fruit machine" reels 13a, 13b and 13c. As with conventional fruit machines, it is

player has decided to collect or gamble, box 34, Fig. 11.

#### Claims

1. A coin-free gaming machine comprising first means defining a plurality of separate series of symbols, second means operative to select a symbol from each series in a random or simulated random manner and provides a selected combination of symbols and to select other symbols of the series and to display the selected combination and the other selected symbols on a screen, third means predefining some predetermined combinations of symbols as winning combinations and other combinations as losing combinations, fourth means operative to determine whether a selected combination is a winning combination or a losing combination, and fifth means operative on some but not all of the occasions that a losing combination is selected to enable the losing combination to be changed to a winning combination, the operative occasions being determined in a random or simulated random manner, said fifth means comprising sixth means operative to display on the screen, initially in a position spaced apart from the selected symbols, a control symbol, seventh means operable by the player for moving the control symbol on the screen in directions selected by the player eighth means which, if operated, when the control symbol is over out of the symbols displayed by the second means, to cause that symbol to move thereafter with the control symbol, and eighth means which, when operated, causes the seventh means to cease to have effect until the seventh means is again operated, whereby if the sixth, seventh and eighth means are operated correctly by the player one of the said other symbols selected by the second means can be moved into a desired position in which it becomes substituted for one of said selected combination of symbols to change a losing combination into a winning combination symbol such that, if substituted for one of the selected symbols, the losing combination would be changed to a winning combination, and seventh means operative by the player for moving the position of said other symbol on the screen in directions selected by the player such that, if some seventh means is operated correctly by the player, said other symbol can be moved to a desired position in which it becomes substituted for said one of the selected symbols so as to change the losing combination to a winning combination.
2. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein after said second means has operated to carry out a selection the seventh and eighth means are only operative for a predetermined period.
3. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 1 wherein the screen is a cathode ray tube screen.
4. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said desired position is the actual position of said one of the selected

#### 65 combination of symbols.

5. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said fifth means comprises ninth means operative, in the event of a winning combination being obtained, to provide the player with a choice between either collecting a reward of a certain value or gambling upon increasing the value of the reward with the chance of decreasing the value of the reward.
  6. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 5 wherein said ninth means is operative, in the event of the value of the reward being increased to provide the player with a further choice between either collecting the reward of the increased value or gambling upon still further increasing the value of the reward with the chance of decreasing the value of the reward.
  7. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 5 or claim 6 wherein the decrease in the value of the reward is to zero.
  8. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said sixth means is operative to sometimes display the control signal and sometimes display a signal indicating the seventh and eighth means are inoperative in a random or simulated random manner.
  9. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein some losing combinations are such that said fifth means is incapable of changing any of them to a winning combination.
  10. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said first and second means are operative to display or to simulate rotating reels or drums which stop at random or pseudo-random on the screen.
  11. A coin-free gaming machine substantially as herein before described with reference to the accompanying drawings.
- New claims or amendments to claims filed on 27-105 11-81  
Superseded claims 1, 5 and 6
- New or amended claims:—
1. A coin-free gaming machine comprising first means defining a plurality of separate series of symbols, second means operative to select a symbol from each series in a random or simulated random manner and provide a selected combination of symbols and to select other symbols of the series and to display the selected combination and the other selected symbols on a screen, third means predefining some predetermined combinations of symbols as winning combinations and other combinations as losing combinations, fourth means operative to determine whether a selected combination is a winning combination or a losing combination, and fifth means operative on some but not all of the occasions that a losing combination is selected to enable the losing combination to be changed to a winning combination, the operative occasions being determined in a random or simulated random manner, said fifth means comprising sixth

means operative to display on the screen, initially in a position spaced apart from the selected symbols, a control symbol, seventh means operable by the player for moving the control symbol on the screen in directions selected by the player, eighth means which, if operated, when the control symbol is over one of the symbols displayed by the second means, will cause that symbol to move thereafter with the control symbol, ninth means which, when operated, causes the eighth means to cease to have effect until the eighth means is again operated, whereby if the seventh, eighth and ninth means are operated correctly by the player one of the said other symbols selected by the second means can be moved into a desired position in which it becomes substituted for one of said selected combination of symbols to change a losing combination into a

- winning combination.
- 20 5. A gaming machine as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said fifth means comprises tenth means operative, in the event of a winning combination being obtained, to provide the player with a choice between either collecting 25 a reward of a certain value or gambling upon increasing the value of the reward with the chance of decreasing the value of the reward.
6. A gaming machine as claimed in claim 5 wherein said tenth means is operative, in the 30 event of the value of the reward being increased to provide the player with a further choice between either collecting the reward of the increased value or gambling upon still further increasing the value of the reward with the 35 chance of decreasing the value of the reward.